



VSDB Consolidation Task Force

July 31, 2003

Data Summary

The number of residential schools for the deaf and blind nationally was explained.

What does it tell us?

A residential program for deaf and blind students is a current service delivery option in all but two states in the United States.





Data Summary

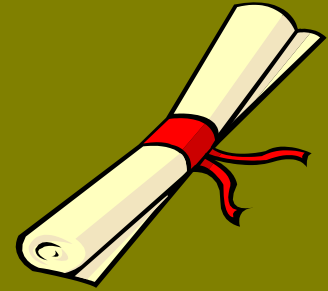
The early intervention services were described.

Why is this important?

The provision of services to babies with deafness is limited by the lack of qualified service providers in Virginia. The schools have provided services in the past but are not required to provide this service. The VSDB-S is also a newborn screening clinic which is not mandated by program requirements.

Should this be part of the program? If so, how?

Data Summary



The diploma options were presented.

Why is this important?

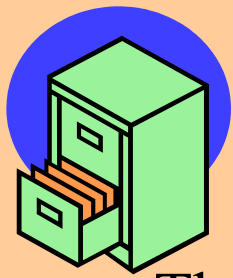
The diploma options illustrate the program separation that began in 1995 between the two schools. The two schools in combination provide a continuum of program options. There is program overlap in the opportunity for obtaining a special (IEP) diploma. There are differing public opinions about the assignment of students to sites.

VSDB-Staunton

standard diploma
modified standard diploma
special (IEP) diploma
certificate of completion

VSDBM-Hampton

special (IEP) diploma
certificate of completion



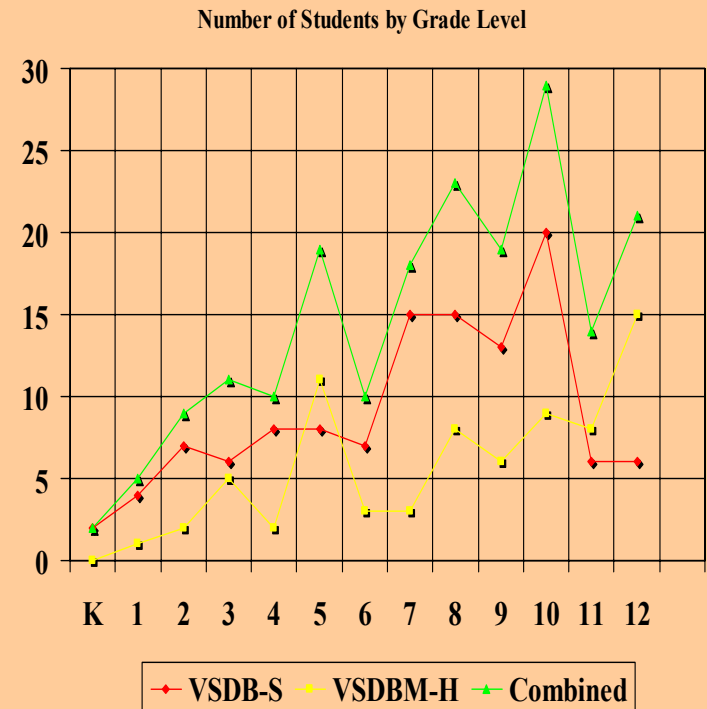
Data Summary

The current enrollment was presented and a graph of the distribution of students across grade levels.

What does it tell us?

- The majority of students are in upper grades (7-12).
- The enrollment of the school has fallen to a level that limits class size for effective instruction in some grade levels and some high school courses.
- A reduced population raises concerns over duplication of costs associated with two facilities.

*see handout on enrollment since 1980



Data Summary

The number of students with sensory impairments served by local school divisions was presented.

What does it tell us?

- The VSDBs serve approximately 5% (in HI and VI areas each) of the total population of students with hearing and visual impairments currently identified by local school divisions.
- The VSDBM-Hampton serves 1% of all students with multiple disabilities (the number of sensory impaired multi-disabled students is not known).
- The majority of students with sensory impairments are served in their local school divisions.



Data Summary

The composition of the Advisory Commission of the two schools was explained.

Why is it important?

The idea and subsequent composition of the advisory commission was designed to assist with the consolidation efforts of the two schools and does not reflect the requirements of a special education advisory committee for local school divisions.

What is needed in a new plan?

VSDB Advisory Commission required by state code. The Commission is comprised of the following:

- 3 Senators
- 5 Members of the House of Delegates
- 3 Citizen representatives
- 2 VSDB Superintendents
- 1 DOE Director of State Operated Programs



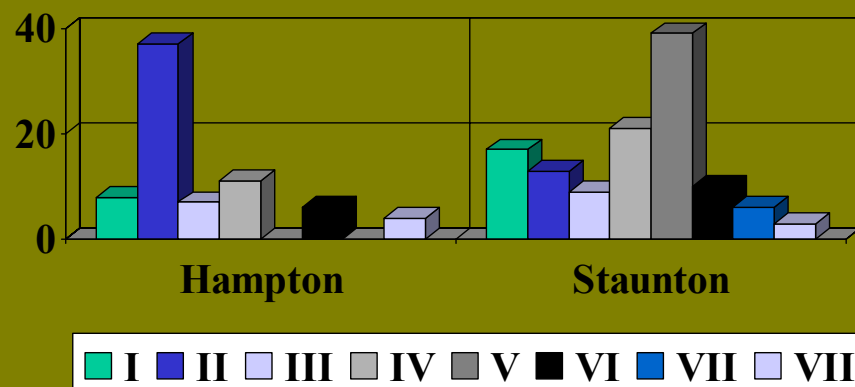
Data Summary

The distribution of students by Superintendent's regions was provided.

What does it tell us?

- All regions are utilizing services of the two schools.
- The highest numbers of students receiving services reside in Supts Regions II and V where the VSDBs are located.

Student Placement by
VSDB and Superintendent's Region

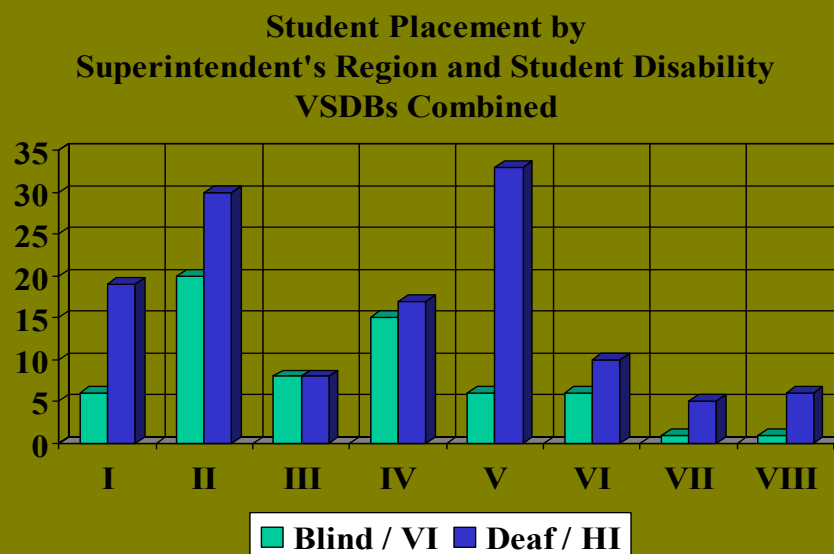


Data Summary

The distribution of students by Superintendent's region and disability was illustrated.

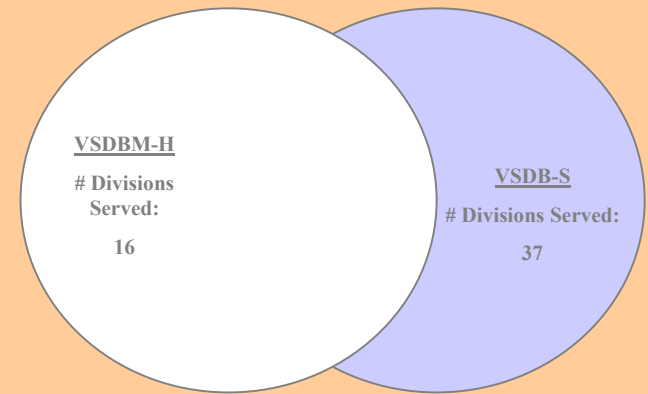
What does it tell us?

There are significantly more children with hearing impairment and deafness being served than students with visual impairments and blindness.



Data Summary

The overlap of the 70 school divisions currently served by both schools was presented.



What does it tell us?

The VDSB-Staunton serves 37 school divisions that Hampton does not serve.

The VDBM-Hampton serves 16 school division that VSDB-Staunton does not serve.

17 additional school divisions have students placed at both schools.

53% of all the school divisions in the state are using the VSDBs as a placement option. * *See handout for school divisions served.*

Data Summary

Known factors for placement at the VSDBs was shared.

Why is that important?

It illustrates the kind of services that are needed from a residential state school for the deaf and the blind.

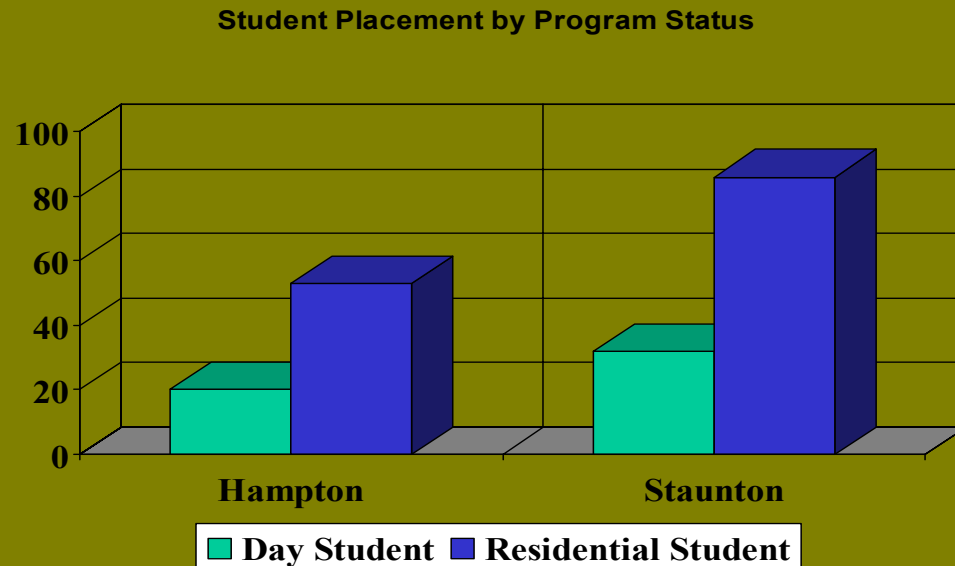
- Lack of qualified teachers and resources
- Emersion (Deaf/HI - ASL)
- Cost of Needed Assistive Technology (Blind/VI)
- Transfer Students
- Complications related to ESL
- Parent Choice
- Behavior Issues
- Cultural issues
- Mismatch of student to program
- Student lack of communication skills
- Need for residential services

Data Summary

A comparison of day students versus residential students was provided.

What does it tell us?

There are more students served residentially than as day students at both schools.

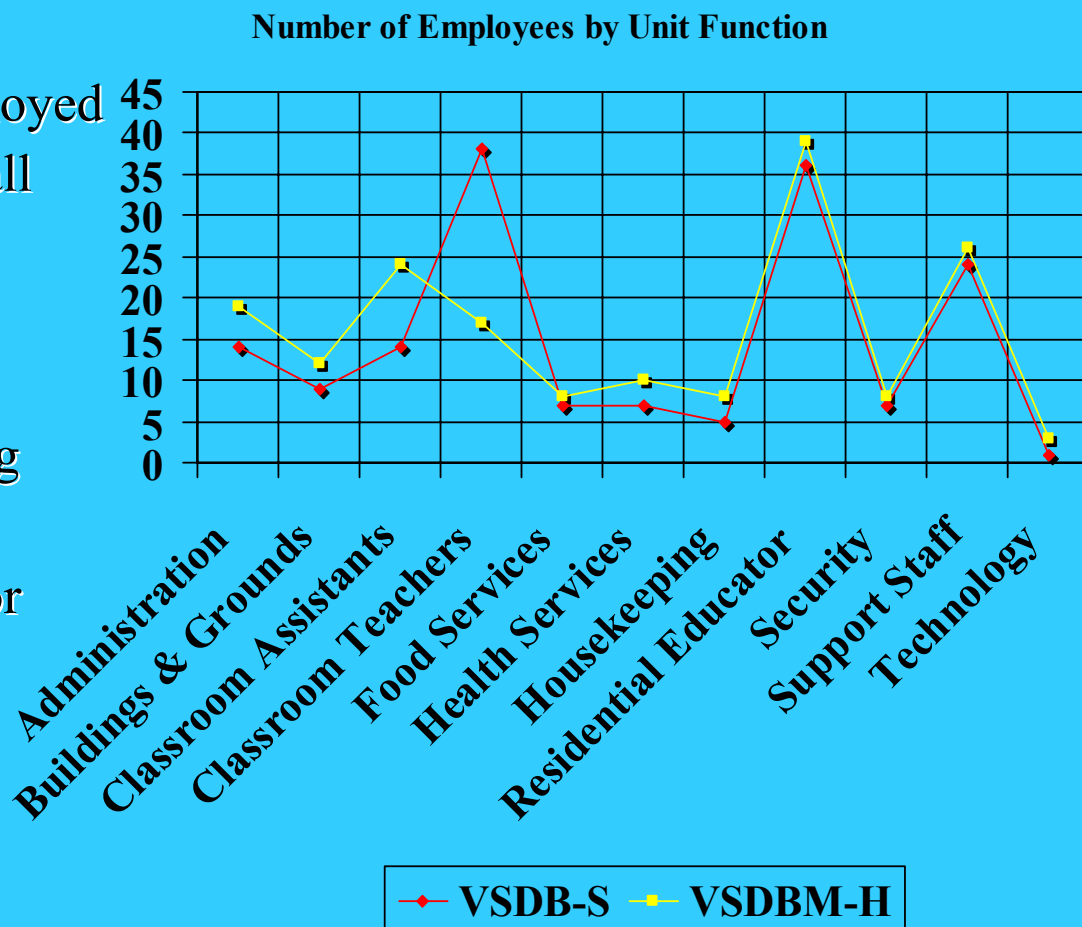


Data Summary

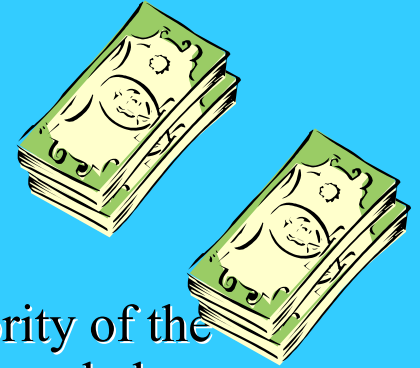
A graph of staff employed at both schools was developed.

What does it tell us?

- There are more staff employed at the VSDBM-Hampton in all areas except classroom teachers.
- This information may be helpful in determining needed staff as required by the appropriation language for the selected option.



Data Summary



Information about funding was provided.

What does it tell us?

Salaries and facilities costs are encumbering the majority of the budget for both schools. This limits the provision of needed instructional materials and assistive technology.

- The majority of school funding comes from state appropriation.
- The majority of the schools' expenses are payroll and facilities management and are currently intruding on needed allocations for instructional support.
- The DOE supports the schools with a per pupil (ADM) support and special education federal funds. The majority of special education funds are allocated for teacher salaries.
- The VSDB-S has some existing capitol project costs (Boiler, Lead Based Paint Abatement) in addition to needed renovations of buildings.

Data Summary

Information about the two schools licensure status was provided.

Why is this important?

These regulations address educational programs but do not include the SOL performance standard for local school divisions under the state “accreditation” system. Under “No Child Left Behind” the VSDBs will have to be included in the DOE accountability system.

The VSDBs are issued an operating license from the Department of Education. This operating license satisfies the requirements of the Interdepartmental Regulations of Children’s Residential Facilities.

Data Summary



The agency status of the two schools was described.

Why is this important?

The Task Force may want to consider any changes needed that may enhance the implementation plan.

- All of the real estate and personal property of the two schools has been transferred to and under the control of the Board of Education.
- The two schools function as two separate agencies and submit their budgets directly to the Office of Budget and Planning.

Data Summary

Information about the school sites with regard to building descriptions, uses and overall condition was provided.

What does it tell us?

- Both schools have more space than needed for the number of students served.
- There are “duplication of effort” costs that need to be considered for development of a consolidation option.
- The buildings were not intentionally designed for students with sensory impairments with regard to needed space, lighting and acoustics.
- There are space limitations to consider under the option of serving all students at one site.



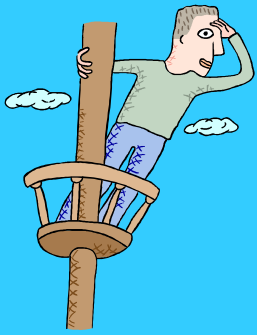
Data Summary

Information was presented that a significant number of staff currently at both schools do not hold proper credentials.

Why is this important?

Recruitment of qualified staff is an area of concern that requires continued effort. Does anything need to be included about that in the Implementation Plan?



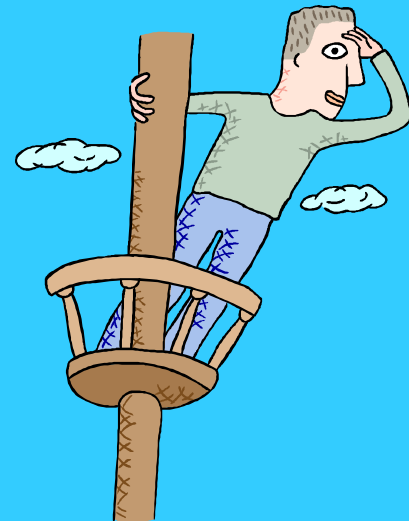


Data Summary

The program separation that began in 1995 between the two schools is not widely known publicly nor is it complete.

Why is this important?

Some of the previous input to the DOE recommends separating the programs and leaving both schools open when that is the current situation.

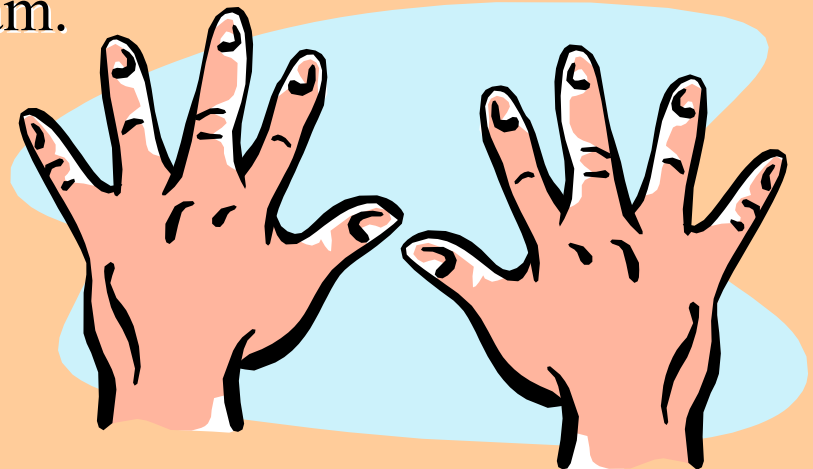


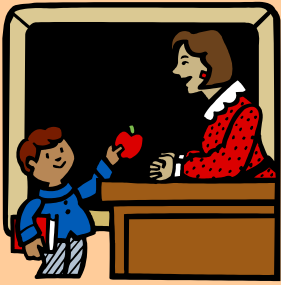
Data Summary

Information about the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI) was presented.

Why is this important?

It is the DOE recommendation that efforts to increase the ASL proficiency of all staff should continue and be a structured part of the program.





Data Summary

Explanations of special education regulations and requirement (LRE, IEP, Special Education, Specialized Instruction) were discussed.

Why is this important?

The current structure of the VSDBs is one of a “service provider” for local school divisions. The suggestion has previously been made to the DOE that the schools reflect the structure and responsibility of a local school division.

To do this requires regulatory changes and would involve unexpected budget increases during the school year. This could mean a substantive change in the way the program is structured and funded.

Data Summary

The VSDB admission process was explained.

Why?

There is a limit to the school's capacity to serve students. Expected capacity is an important factor to consider in developing the Implementation Plan.

Information about why students leave the VSDBs was provided?

Why is this important?

To illustrate that the schools are one placement option on the continuum of possible special education placements. The schools are not intended to meet the needs of all children with sensory impairments. Children's needs change over time and other options become more appropriate.

Data Summary



Comparison of state SOL data for all students, students with and without disabilities, HI and VI students only were provided for the VSDB Staunton?

What does it tell us?

Most of the current SOL performance indicators of the school are below the standard currently established for test scores in the accreditation system.

The SOL performance indicators are below the test scores for students with sensory impairments served in public schools on the average.

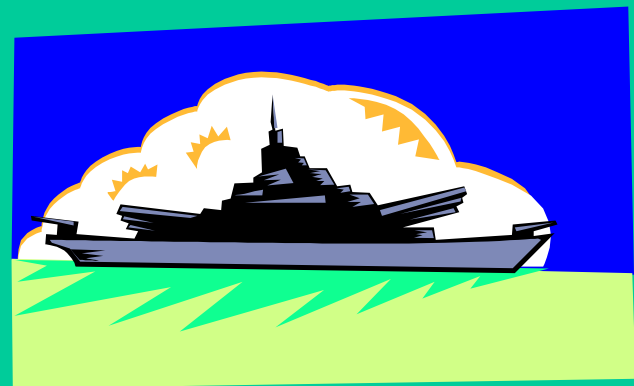


Data Summary

Information about the number of military families served by the two schools was reported.

What does it tell us?

Military families comprise 3% of all families served.



Data Summary

Information about current transportation costs were provided.

Why is this important?

The cost of transportation must be included in the plan and is required by the appropriation language. Transportation is an area considered to be a duplication of effort when considering consolidation of services to one site.

VSDB-S Richard's Bus Service, Luray VA

3 buses = \$160,000

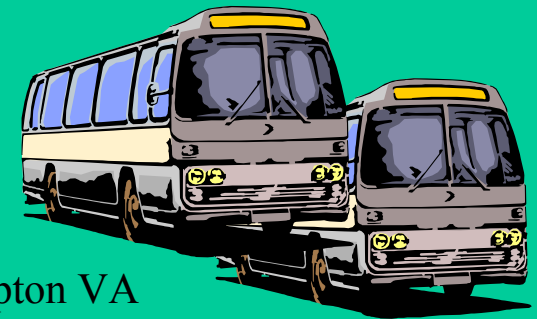
1 VSDB bus = \$12,464

VSDBM-H Road Burner's Tour Company, Hampton VA

3 buses= \$185,082

Auto Rent Company, Hampton, Virginia

1 bus= \$28,815



One driver and at least one assistant on each bus